

Appln No. 09/880,634

Amdt date March 28, 2005

Reply to Office action of December 27, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office action dated December 27, 2004, the examiner rejects claim 1 as allegedly anticipated by Ishii, et al. (JP 2000-01207 A1), and as allegedly anticipated by Nazri (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,912). However, applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite that the second dispersed element "comprises one or more elements selected from the group consisting of transition metals, alkali metals, alkali earth metals, Group 3A elements, semi-metals of Group 4A, and elements of Group 5A, said transition metals being selected from the group consisting of Mn, Cr, Co, Cu, Mo, W; said alkali metals being selected from the group consisting of Na and K; said alkali earth metal being selected from the group consisting of Ca and Mg; said Group 3A elements being selected from the group consisting of Sc, Y, lanthanoids and actinoids; said semi-metal of Group 4A being Zr; and said element of Group 5A being selected from the group consisting of V, Nb and Ta." By this amendment, applicants have excluded F, Si, Ni, P, Ti, Ga, Sn, Ge, Sb, Ti and Al as possible second dispersed elements. Neither Ishii nor Nazri teaches or suggests the composition now claimed in amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1, as amended, is allowable over Ishii and Nazri.

The examiner also rejects claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over either Ishii or Nazri. However, claim 6 depends from claim 1, which is now allowable over Ishii and Nazri. Claim 6 is therefore also allowable over Ishii and Nazri.

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In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicants submit that all of pending claims 1 and 6, as amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request a timely indication of allowance. However, if there are any remaining issues that can best be addressed by telephone, applicants invite the examiner to contact applicants' attorney at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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